

Armistead Maupin, writer of the Tales of the City series and guru of gay outness, believes gay people should accept themselves joyfully, with no apologies, and get on with the adventures of life...and "stir up some shit" now and then in the process.

"We either believe its o.k. to be gay, or we don't. If we do, what's the big deal?" Maupin said in a phone interview with Ground Zero.

Homosexuality is not a dirty little secret that we need to keep from the rest of the world, for ourselves or anyone else, according to Maupin.

"I speak from my own impressions," Maupin said in the interview. "I don't necessarily honor the judgements of those who chose to keep their lives a secret. I won't censor my speech when there are those in Hollywood making homophobic movies and secretly going home to their lovers."

Despite this liberal viewpoint, Maupin grew up in the conservative South and remembers the impact of the rhetoric used during the Civil Rights Movement.

"In the 60s, I remember the term 'Special Rights' used against Blacks and how christian leaders used the Bible to promote and defend segregation," Maupin said.

Not much has changed. The 'Special Rights' rhetoric continues to be used to oppress and deny equal rights to gays.

Even with all the negativity surrounding the gay issues, Maupin remains a staunch optimist.

"I think most Americans recognize the supreme discrimination against gay people," Maupin said. "That's why the radical right has adopted the term 'Special Rights' rather than be openly and admittedly bigoted."

Maupin condemns the religious right for denying homosexuals full anointing in faith and for using that faith against gays. He believes, however, we are winning the battle.

"I truly believe history will prove the Radical Right wrong and one day christian leaders will apologize for the wrongs done to gays," Maupin said.

"Gay people are the most spiritual people I've ever met," he continued, "We are constantly asking ourselves what we should do in each situation."

Maupin came out at the age of 29, and soon after, met his life partner and now business manager, Terry Anderson. They share the busy life of a writer with love and commitment.

"Gay people who chose to live together and proclaim their love to the world in the face of such adversity have more than heterosexuals who don't, and can never know, the meaning and depth of that kind of love," Maupin said.

On Saturday, July 8, Maupin will be the guest of Ground Zero at the Pride Center for a reading and autographing. He looks forward to coming to Colorado Springs and holds its gay community in high regard.

"I admire your courage and stamina in the face of such brilliantly disguised bigotry," Maupin told the Colorado Springs gay community. "Sometimes I find it difficult to be out in San Francisco surrounded by tolerant people. I commend you for your spirit."

Maupin believes gays need to stop waiting for society to welcome them with open arms and learn to integrate themselves fully into society.

In 1985, The Advocate printed one of their most widely quoted articles, "Armistead Maupin's Design for Living." It contains seven points for making change and living as a fully inclusive person in this society.

- 1) Stop begging for acceptance. Accept yourself joyfully and get on with life.

- 2) Don't run away from straight people, they have a lot to learn from you about tolerance, humor and comfortable enjoyment of their own sexuality (Lord knows, some of them need this!)

- 3) Refuse to cooperate in The Lie. Nobody's job, or life, will be safe until the general public is permitted to recognize the full scope of our homosexual population.

- 4) Stir up some shit now and then. ('Nuf said!)

- 5) Don't sell your soul to the gay commercial culture. Don't swap one "Schlock-heavy lifestyle" for another. Learn from the gay experience.

- 6) Stop insulting people the people you love by assuming they don't know your gay. (C'mon! Do you really believe they haven't guessed or at least suspected you by now?)

- 7) Learn to feel mortal.

"Appearances don't count for squat when they stick you in the ground," Maupin stated, "so why should you waste a single moment of your life seeming to be something your not?"

Maupin is currently writing the screenplay to his latest novel published in 1992, "Maybe the Moon" which chronicles the adventures of a 31-inch actress in Hollywood. To date his books have been translated into 10 languages, with over a million copies in print.

Denver's channel 6 will tape an oration by Maupin on July 7, where he will be given an open forum to talk about his views on being gay and the gay movement.

"We will succeed as a movement," Maupin told Ground Zero. "We are the only political movement in the history of the world that is rooted in the need to love and be loved, and that need is strongest need known to humanity."

"You are one of life's buccaneers," Maupin told the gay world in his Design For Living, "so stop feeling sorry for yourself and hoist your sails. You haven't a moment to loose."

A reception will follow his book-signing and reading at the Pride Center. All proceeds will go to benefit ground Zero.

Armistead Maupin Comes to Colorado Springs

WHAT: A reading and autographing with guest author, Armistead Maupin. Reception to follow. The evening is open to all. Space is on a first-come-first-serve basis.

WHEN: Saturday, July 8, 1995
7:30 p.m.

WHERE: The Pride Center
125 N. Parkside Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(just east of Montgomery Wards, on Parkside between Pikes Peak Ave. and Bijou St.)

How: By car, by boat, by train, on foot or on bicycle, just get there!

Why: Because we like you!

Call Ground Zero if you have any questions or need more information. 635-6086.

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Maupin

Maupin ~~does~~ *both political and cultural* believe, however, that we are winning the battle.

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been out for 22 years, now age 51

"Don't necessarily honor judgements of those who chose to keep their lives a secret.

Don't think there's anything wrong with being gay, I don't censor my speech and I speak from my own impressions. Same thing as pointing out a married person.

"won't censor my speech when there are those in hollywood making homophobic movies and secretly going home to their lovers."

"I use the term queer as a word of pride, we need to revel in our American right to be ourselves.

"When I forgave myself, I forgave everyone else.

We either believe its ok to be gay or we don't, if we do, what's the big deal and let's get on with life.

I think most americans recognize the supreme discrimination against gay people. That's why the radical right has adopted the term special rights rather than be openly and admittedly bigoted.

Political change will follow on the heels of cultural change.

In the 60s when living in the south, I remember the term special rights used against blacks and christian leaders using the bible to promote and defend segregation.

people live according to their fears, so we invent religion to appease our fears and justify them in some way.

TO COLORADO SPRINGS:

"I admire your courage and stamina in the face of such brilliantly disguised bigotry. Sometimes I find it difficult to out in SF surrounded by tolerant people. I commend you for your efforts.

I think we're winning the battle. I truly believe history will prove the RR wrong and one day christian leaders will apologize for the wrongs done to gays.

Gays people are the most moral and spiritual people I've ever met. We are constantly asking ourselves what we should do in each situation.

Gay people who chose to live together and proclaim their love to the world in the face of such adversity have more ~~and~~ *than* heterosexuals who don't know, and can never know, the meaning and depth of that love.

We will succeed as a movement. We are the only political movement in the history of the world that is rooted in the need to love and be loved, and that need is the strongest need known to humanity.

